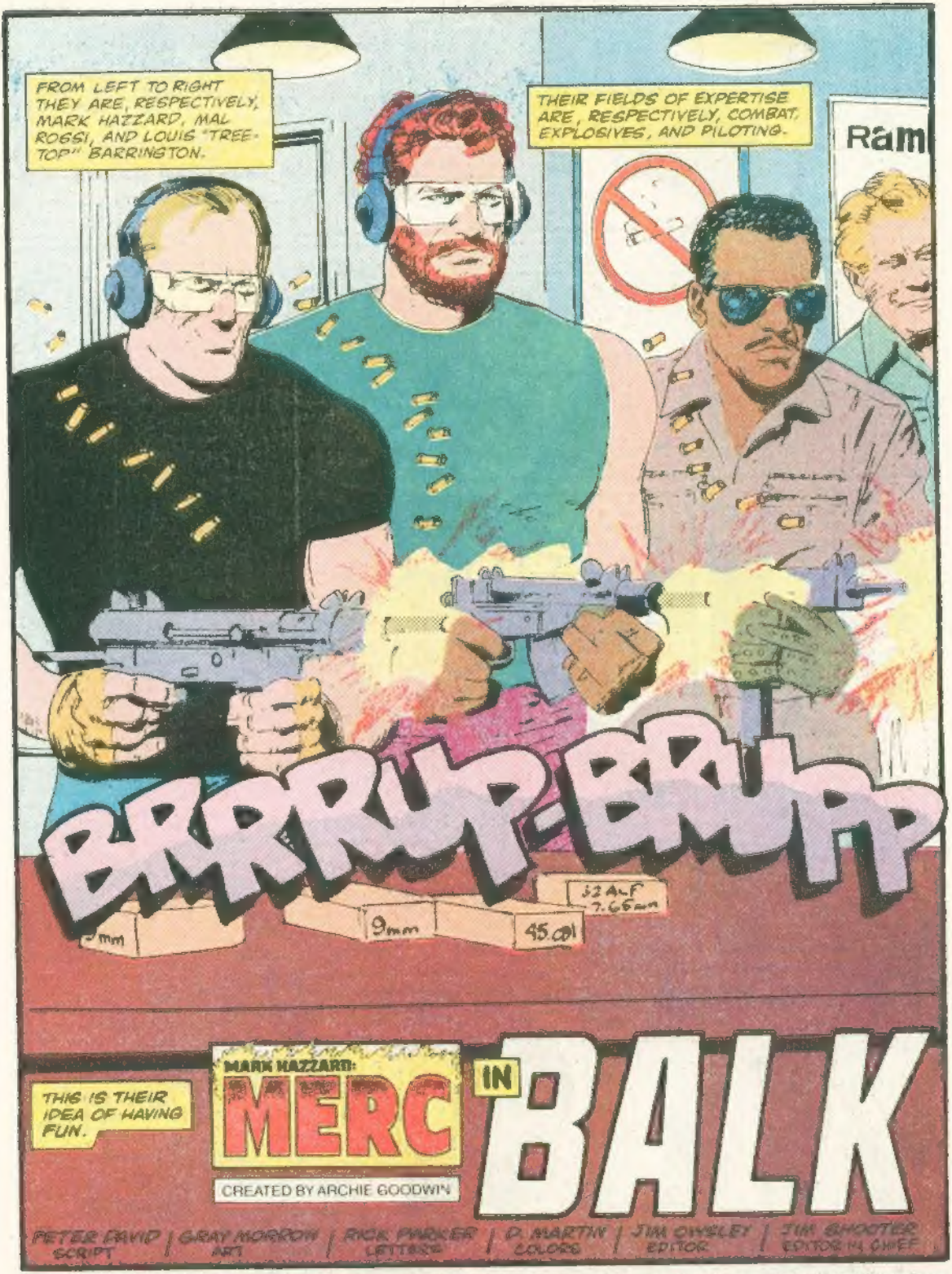
MARVEL®

75¢
U.K. 40p
CAN. 95¢

2
DEC

new universe™

MARK HAZZARD: MERC™



MARK HAZZARD: MERC ™ Vol. 1, No. 2, December, 1986. Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP. James E. Galton, President; Stan Lee, Publisher; Michael Hobson, Group Vice-President; Milt Schiffman, Vice President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Published monthly. Copyright © 1986 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price 75¢ per copy in the U.S. and 95¢ in Canada. Subscription rate $9.00 for 12 issues; Canada and foreign $11.00 Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended and any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. MARVEL and MARK HAZZARD: MERC (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) are trademarks of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO MARK HAZZARD: MERC, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**

TO STUDY THEM AS THEIR SMG'S* ERUPT IN VIOLENCE IS TO STUDY MEN WHOSE LIVES DEPEND ON THEIR SKILL WITH THESE WEAPONS (AND OTHERS).
BRDRDRDT!
BRDRDRDT!
BRDRDRDT!
* SUB-MACHINE GUNS--OWZ.
TO STUDY THOSE AT THEIR SIDE IS TO STUDY PEOPLE WHO GET OFF BY SHOOTING THINGS.
KDTDTDT!
KUDDTDT!
KDUT-KDT!
CEASE FIRE!
AS FOR WHAT'S LEFT OF THEIR TARGET...
...IT LENDS NEW MEANING TO THE TERM "VIOLENCE IN TELEVISION."
TV
THANKS, PEOPLE! I CAN'T WAIT TO SHIP THIS BACK TO THE MANUFACTURER! THIS SET'S GIVEN ME NOTHING BUT AGGRAVATION...
MAKES ME SORRY I STOLE IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
TELL ME THIS AGAIN, MAL... HAZZARD'S GOING TO A LITTLE LEAGUE GAME THIS SUNDAY?
WHAT'CHA GONNA DO, MARK? PICK OFF THE BASE RUNNERS?
OH, HE'S REAL SERIOUS, TREETOP. HIS SON'S PLAYING SHORTSTOP. AND WE ALL KNOW WHAT A DEDICATED DAD OL' MARK IS.
HOW OLD IS SCOTT THESE DAYS, MARK?
WHO? OH. TWELVE, I THINK.
YEAH, TWELVE.

HEY, IS IT TOO MUCH TO WANT TO ACT LIKE A NORMAL FATHER ONCE IN A WHILE?
OH, HECK, MATEY, I NEVER KNEW YOU WERE SUCH A SENSITIVE GUY.
WELL I AM, JERK-FACE.

TELL ME, MARK, WHAT WITH MY BEING A FOREIGNER, I'M NOT UP ON LOCAL CUSTOMS...
DO MOST "NORMAL FATHERS" PACK HARDWARE WHEN TODDLING OFF TO A BALL GAME?
I WON'T BRING HARDWARE WITH ME. NOT TO THIS.

NO HARDWARE?
THIS FROM A MAN WHO BRINGS A .45 INTO A JACUZZI!

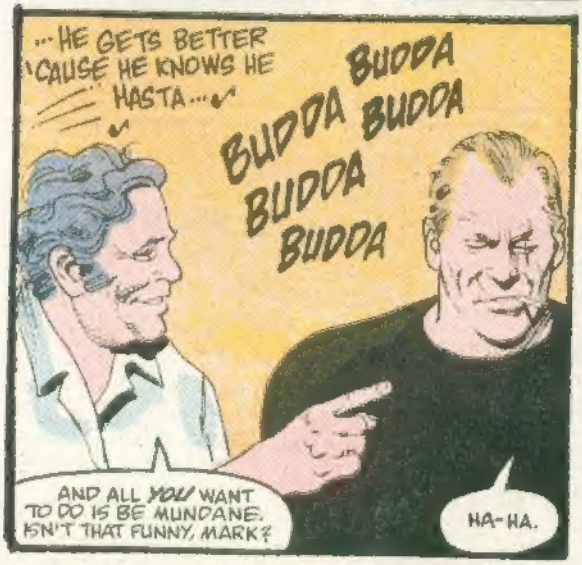
MARK! GOT SOMETHING YOU'LL LOVE.
HEY, TREETOP, I GOT FIFTY BUCKS THAT SAYS HAZZARD WINDS UP SORRY HE DIDN'T TAKE A PIECE TO HIS KID'S GAME THIS SUNDAY.
'CAUSE HIS CHECKS BOUNCE.
WHY NOT BET WITH MARK INSTEAD?
TRUE. OKAY, YOU'RE ON.

CLAM UP, YOU CLOWNS. IF MARK HERE WANTS TO COMMIT SUICIDE, THAT'S HIS BUSINESS.
I KNEW YOU'D LOVE IT, MARK. THE STEYR AUG-SA. A THING OF BEAUTY. KEEP BOTH YOUR EYES OPEN WITH THAT SCOPE.
I ALWAYS USED TO HATE SQUINTING THROUGH SCOPES. GAVE ME CROW'S FEET.
I THOUGHT YOU WALKED FUNNY.
GOT SOME BULLETS?
LEMME CHECK.
YOU'RE A RIOT, MAL. SHAME THAT AUG-SA'S EMPTY.

'SCUSE ME, 'SCUSE ME... THIS THE PLACE WHERE YOU CAN SHOOT ANYTHING YOU CAN BRING THROUGH THE DOOR?
SURE IS.

GREAT!
HEADS UP, PEOPLE! GOT SOMETHING FOR YA TO SHOOT.
AH! TEN POUNDS OF STEREOPHONIC NIPPONESE DELIGHT. DOWNRIGHT AMAZIN' WHAT YOU CAN BUY WITH WELFARE CHECKS AND FOOD STAMPS!
GOD BLESS AMERICA.

I'LL PASS.
TURN IT ON! I WANNA HEAR IT SCREAM!
HE'S JAM-MASTER JAY... THE BIG BEAT BLASTER...
Y'KNOW, IT'S FUNNY. PEOPLE WHO LIVE MUNDANE LIVES COME HERE SO THEY CAN PRETEND THEY'RE RAMBO...


...HE GETS BETTER 'CAUSE HE KNOWS HE HASTA...
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
AND ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS BE MUNDANE. ISN'T THAT FUNNY, MARK?
HA-HA.

YO, SOME TWERP SWIPED MY RADIO ON THE SUBWAY BEFORE. HE COME IN HERE?
SURE DID, GODZILLA.

I LET HIM SHOOT IT TO BITS AND LEAVE OUT THE SIDE. WHAT'CHA GONNA DO ABOUT--
PAY

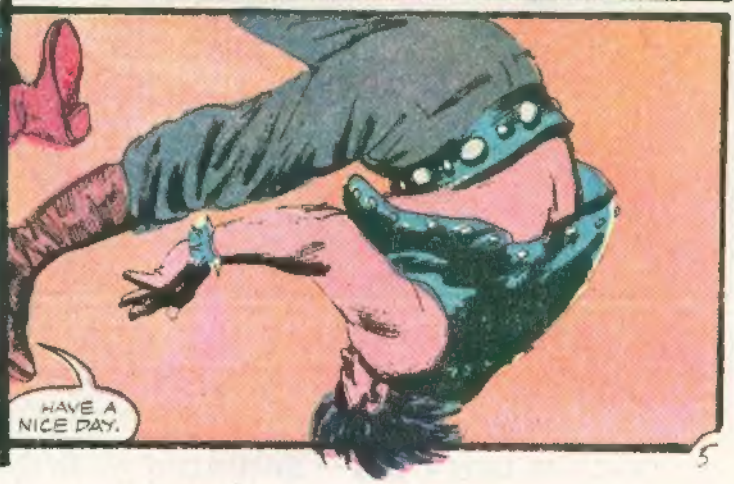
--IT?

NEED HELP, DAVE?
THE DAY DAVE KLAPHOLZ NEEDS HELP WITH TWO-BIT SCUM IS...IS...
...UH FRIDAY.

SONUVAGUN TODAY'S FRIDAY
GRAK!

KRUNK!

I NEVER COULD STAND PEOPLE WHO BLAST RADIOS ON SUBWAYS.
ME NEITHER.
GOOD THING I HAVEN'T GOT A RADIO, SO I CAN'T.


HAVE A NICE DAY.

THANKS, MARK.
THANKS AREN'T NECESSARY.

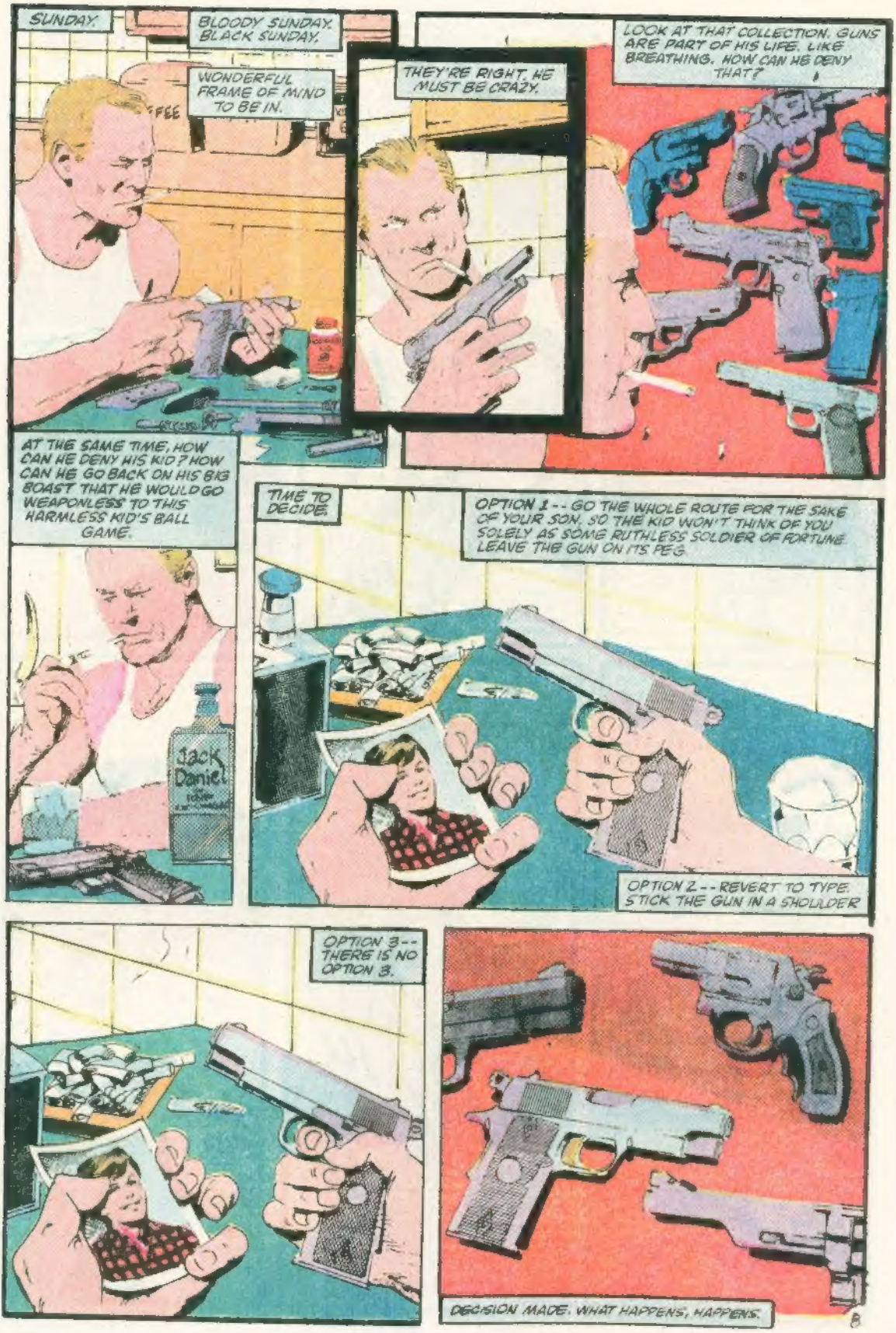
NO, OF COURSE THEY'RE NOT. HOW MUCH DO I OWE YOU?
TEN BUCKS. IF I'D BROKEN SWEAT IT'D BE $25.

STILL SMOKIN' LIKE A CHIMNEY. THOSE THINGS ARE GONNA KILL YOU, MARK.
THEY'LL HAVE TO WAIT IN LINE.

"AND IT'S A PRETTY LONG LINE."
BUT YOU'RE MY CLIENT, HENRI--!
I INSIST, GORDON. LUNCH IS ON ME, ON ONE CONDITION.

YOU MUST TELL ME WHAT IS BOTHERING YOU. YOU ARE MY STOCKBROCKER, GORDON, BUT ALSO MY FRIEND...
... AND YOU HAVE BEEN VERY DISTRACTED DURING OUR LUNCH. WHY?
PERHAPS AN AFFAIR OF THE HEART, EH? WE FRENCH ARE EXPERTS ON SUCH MATTERS.

THAT'S NOT IT, EXACTLY, ALTHOUGH IT'S MARRIAGE RELATED...
OH BLAST IT, HENRI, IT'S MY STEP-SON, SCOTT. IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE I MARRIED JOAN, AND I WAS HOPING HE WAS STARTING TO ACCEPT ME AS, IF NOT A FATHER SUBSTITUTE, AT LEAST A CLOSE FRIEND.
INSTEAD, I'M ALWAYS OVERSHADOWED BY HIS FATHER, A SOLDIER OF FORTUNE NAMED MARK HAZZARD.
FOR EXAMPLE, I'VE BEEN TAKING SCOTT TO HIS LITTLE LEAGUE GAMES ALL SUMMER. OH, HE'S BEEN POLITE, THANKED ME. BUT THAT'S ALL, IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT.
SUDDENLY, THIS SUNDAY, OUT OF THE BLUE, HAZZARD'S SUPPOSED TO COME TO THE GAME. AND SUCH EXCITEMENT FROM THAT BOY LIKE I HAVEN'T SEEN.
AND THE BOY IS YOUR ONLY CONCERN, GORDON?
PERCEPTIVE AS ALWAYS, HENRI. I GUESS I COULD HANDLE BEING SECOND-FIDDLE TO HAZZARD IF IT WERE JUST SCOTT--
BUT HENRI, EVEN THOUGH SHE'D NEVER SAY SO, HOW DO I KNOW THAT MY WIFE, JOAN, DOESN'T THINK OF ME AS SECOND-FIDDLE TO HAZZARD AS WELL?
THE GAME IS THIS SUNDAY, YOU SAY? NEAR WHERE YOU LIVE IN QUEENS?
YES. CUNNINGHAM PARK. WHY?
NO REASON. WHAT IS YOUR FORTUNE, FRIEND GORDON?
"WHEN THE GODS ARE ANGRY, THEY ANSWER OUR PRAYERS."
I'LL TELL YOU, HENRI-- IF MY PRAYER IS THAT I DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN HAZZARD'S SHADOW ALL THE TIME, THEN I HOPE THE GODS ARE PRETTY HACKED OFF RIGHT NOW.
IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT.
CONSIDER IT CAUGHT, FRIEND GORDON.

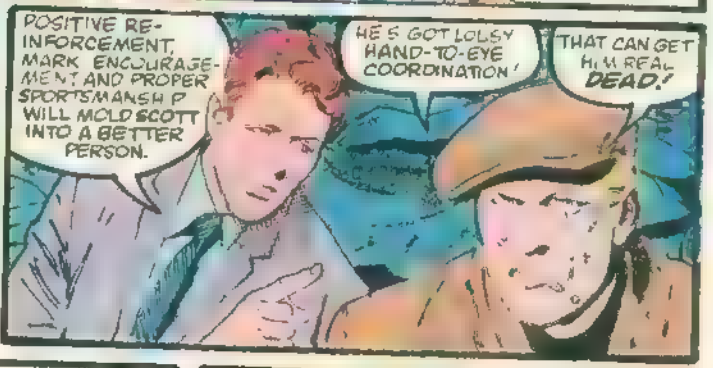

SUNDAY.
BLOODY SUNDAY. BLACK SUNDAY.
WONDERFUL FRAME OF MIND TO BE IN.
THEY'RE RIGHT. HE MUST BE CRAZY.
LOOK AT THAT COLLECTION. GUNS ARE PART OF HIS LIFE. LIKE BREATHING. HOW CAN HE DENY THAT?
AT THE SAME TIME, HOW CAN HE DENY HIS KID? HOW CAN HE GO BACK ON HIS BIG BOAST THAT HE WOULD GO WEAPONLESS TO THIS HARMLESS KID'S BALL GAME.
Jack Daniel
TIME TO DECIDE.
OPTION 1 -- GO THE WHOLE ROUTE FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR SON. SO THE KID WON'T THINK OF YOU SOLELY AS SOME RUTHLESS SOLDIER OF FORTUNE. LEAVE THE GUN ON ITS PEG.
OPTION 2 -- REVERT TO TYPE. STICK THE GUN IN A SHOULDER
OPTION 3 -- THERE IS NO OPTION 3.
DECISION MADE. WHAT HAPPENS, HAPPENS.

CUNNINGHAM PARK, QUEENS.
WHIP IT IN, WALLY! HE'S NO HITTER!
WHO'S J-MAR?
THE STORE THAT SPONSORED THE UNI--
...FORMS!
DAD! YOU MADE IT! WHEN YOU WEREN'T HERE AT THE START I THOUGHT--
SCOTTY, YOU KNOW I KEEP MY WORD.
SORRY, SIR.
AT EASE, SCOTTY. WHO'S WINNING?
THEY ARE.
OBVIOUSLY BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT OUT THERE. WHOSE IDIOT STRATEGY IS THAT?
THE COACH. I STRUCK OUT BASES LOADED LAST GAME, AND COACH YANKED ME. HE SAID HE DOESN'T WANT GUYS WHO CHOKE.
MAYBE I SHOULD CHAT WITH HIM.
GORDON ALREADY TRIED.
OH, LOOK, DEAR. IT'S MARK.
CRIPES. WHY'D HE HAVE TO SHOW UP?
EASY, JOAN. KEEP THE LID ON...
DON'T SHOW YOUR NEW HUSBAND WHAT YOUR EX-HUSBAND DOES TO YOU EVERY TIME HE HAPPENS BY.

KEEP IT LOW AND OUTSIDE OUTSIDE I SAID!
I'M SCOTT'S FATHER!
THE HAZZARD KID? SORRY CAN'T RISK PLAYING HIM HE CAN'T HACK IT
HE LET ME DOWN SO HE'S OUT UNDERSTAND?
I MEAN YOU SEE MY POSITION, RIGHT? UNDERSTAND?
I GOTTA THINK OF THE TEAM.
OF COURSE I GOTTA THINK OF YOUR BOY, TOO WOULDN'T WANT TO PERMANENTLY SCAR HIM OR SOMETHING. UNDERSTAND?
HECK IT'S ONLY A GAME. RIGHT?
TOMMY! COME IN SCOTT'S PLAYING SECOND BASE NOW
BUT DADDY!
SHUT UP! GET IN HERE!
NICE GOING, MARK, YOU'RE HERE ALL OF FIVE MINUTES AND YOU'RE RUNNING TRUE TO FORM.
YOU WEAR YOUR "ILLITERATE THUG" ROUTINE LIKE A SECOND SKIN
HI, JOAN
GORDON. IT'S BEEN A WHILE
COME ON, GORDON SHAKE. I'LL BE CAREFUL.

NEXT INNING..
SAFE!

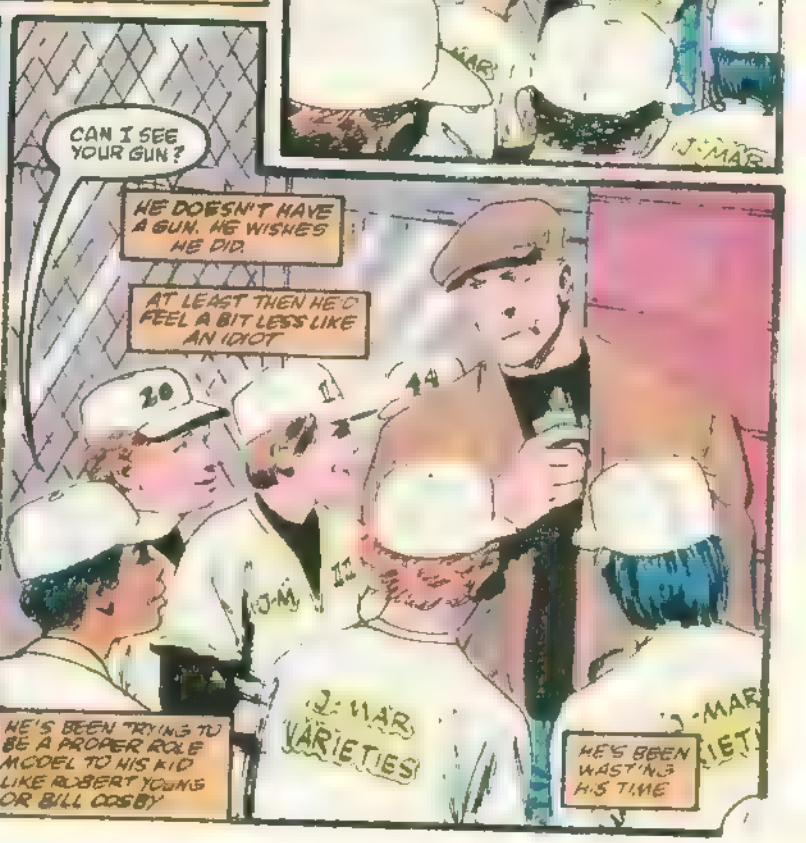
THAT'S OKAY, HONEY! YOU'LL GET HIM NEXT TIME!
YOU TRIED YOUR BEST, SCOTT!
C'MON, SCOTTY! GET IT TOGETHER OUT THERE!


POSITIVE RE-INFORCEMENT, MARK ENCOURAGE-MENT AND PROPER SPORTSMANSHIP WILL MOLD SCOTT INTO A BETTER PERSON.
HE'S GOT LOUSY HAND-TO-EYE COORDINATION!
THAT CAN GET HIM REAL DEAD!

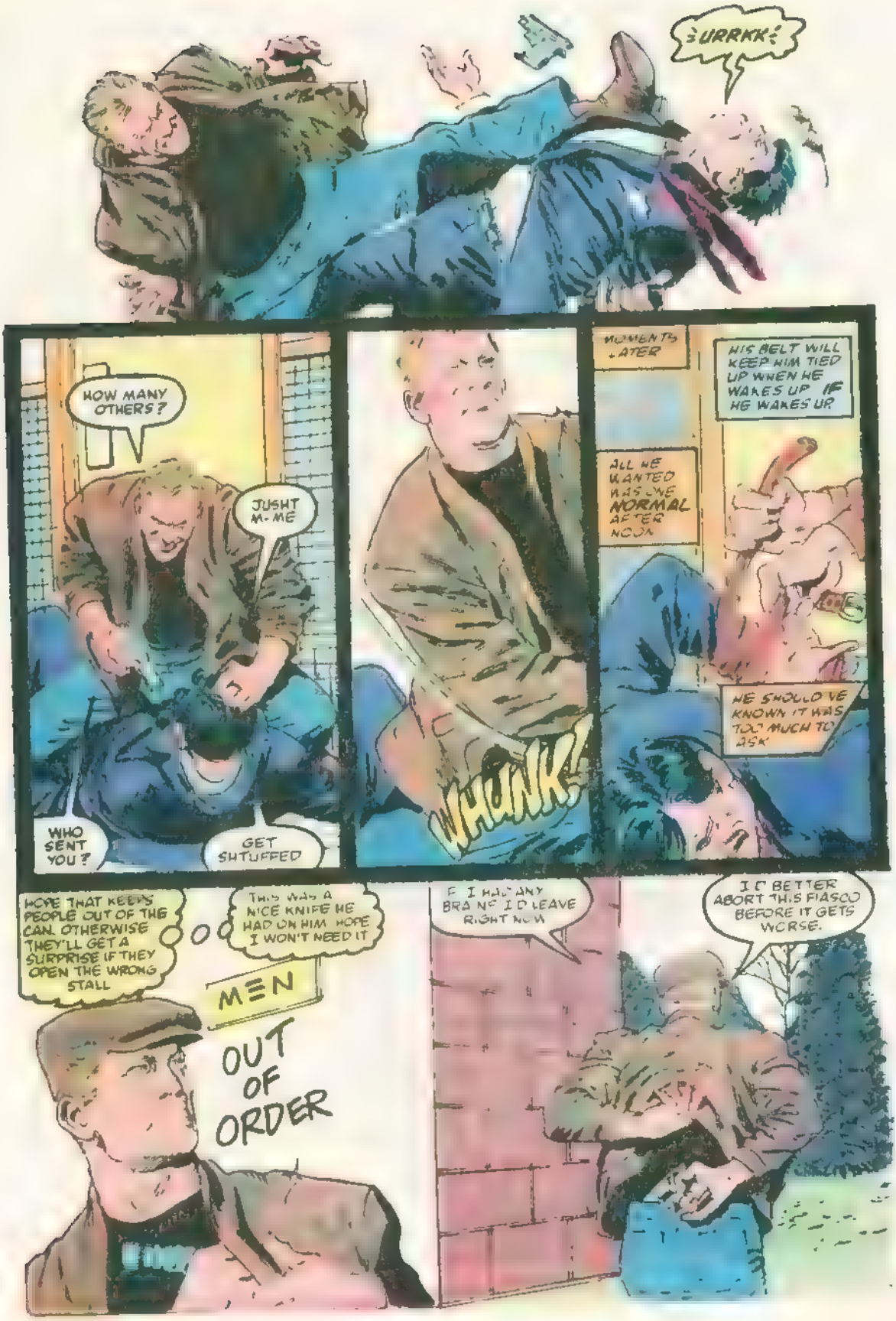
I'LL WORRY ABOUT HIS PERSONALITY WHEN HE LEARNS HOW TO CATCH!
HAZZARD SPOTS A GUY WHO DOESN'T BELONG HERE.

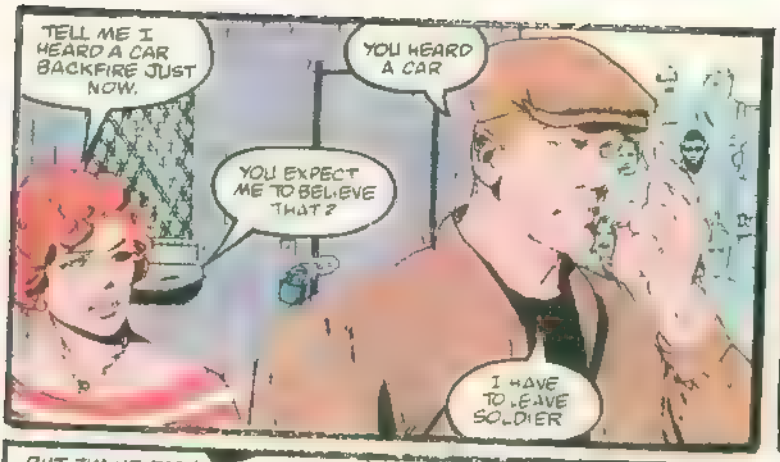
HE DECIDES TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM. HE HOPES THE GUY'S JUST LOST.
DAD!! C'MERE A SECOND!

I TOLD THE GUYS ALL ABOUT YOU, DAD! THEY--
WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING A MERCENARY?
DO YOU KNOW SYLVESTER STALLONE?
HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE YOU KILLED?

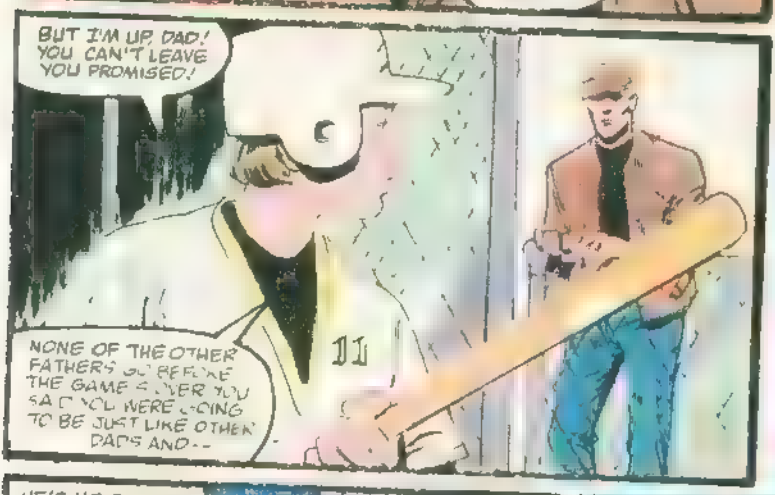

CAN I SEE YOUR GUN?
HE DOESN'T HAVE A GUN. HE WISHES HE DID.
AT LEAST THEN HE'D FEEL A BIT LESS LIKE AN IDIOT.
HE'S BEEN TRYING TO BE A PROPER ROLE MODEL TO HIS KID LIKE ROBERT YOUNG OR BILL COSBY.
J-MAR VARIETIES
HE'S BEEN WASTING HIS TIME.

SHORTLY
AT FIRST I THOUGHT HAZZARD SPOTTED ME. BUT OBVIOUSLY, HE HASN'T
THIS'LL BE A CAKE-WALK. I'LL BE HOME IN TIME TO CATCH THE REST OF THE METS GAME.
GREAT! WITH ANY LUCK I'LL CATCH HIM WITH HIS PANTS DOWN
GRAY-MALKIN HAD THIS GUY PEGGED ALL WRONG.
REST ROOMS
HE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT HIM.
MEN
KRUNCH!
BLAM!
A GUNSHOT! FAR AWAY BUT I'M SURE I HEARD A
WHERE'S MARK?
OH, NO PLEASE NO. MARK NOT HERE.


SURRKK!
HOW MANY OTHERS?
JUSHT M-ME
WHO SENT YOU?
GET SHTUFFED
WHUNK!
MOMENTS LATER
HIS BELT WILL KEEP HIM TIED UP WHEN HE WAKES UP IF HE WAKES UP.
ALL HE WANTED WAS ONE NORMAL AFTER NOON
HE SHOULD'VE KNOWN IT WAS TOO MUCH TO ASK
HOPE THAT KEEPS PEOPLE OUT OF THE CAN. OTHERWISE THEY'LL GET A SURPRISE IF THEY OPEN THE WRONG STALL
THIS WAS A NICE KNIFE HE HAD ON HIM. HOPE I WON'T NEED IT
MEN
OUT OF ORDER
IF I HAD ANY BRAINS I'D LEAVE RIGHT NOW
I'D BETTER ABORT THIS FIASCO BEFORE IT GETS WORSE.

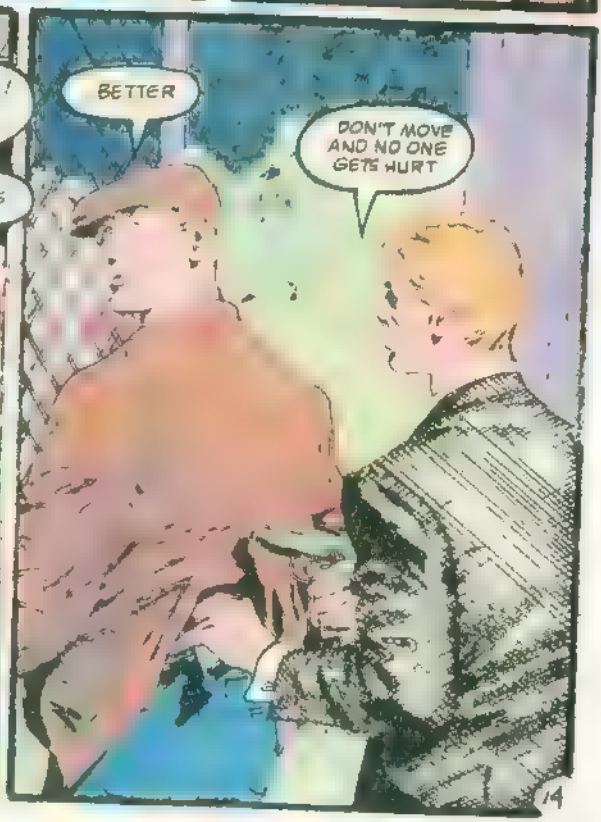

TELL ME I HEARD A CAR BACKFIRE JUST NOW.
YOU HEARD A CAR
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT?
I HAVE TO LEAVE SOLDIER

LEAVING?! BUT--


BUT I'M UP, DAD! YOU CAN'T LEAVE YOU PROMISED!
NONE OF THE OTHER FATHERS GO BEFORE THE GAME EVER YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO BE JUST LIKE OTHER DADS AND--

ALL RIGHT, SCOTTY. I'LL STAY AS LONG AS I CAN
I'M GONNA REGRET THIS

HE'S NO BATTER! EASY OUT, EASY OUT!
WHAT D YOU SAY ABOUT MY SON, KID?
PLAY BACK! HE MIGHT CONNECT
THAT'S


BETTER
DON'T MOVE AND NO ONE GETS HURT

LET'S GO. HANDS AT SIDES NO SUDDEN MOVEMENTS
YOU'RE IN CHARGE
STEERING TWO!
DAD! WHERE RE YOU GOIN ? YOU PROMISED!
J-M
1-1-1-22
AND YOU ALWAYS KEEP YOUR PROMISE
OH NO
THAT GUY HAS A GUN ON MY DAD!
WHA--?
THAT'S MY BOY!
YOU MISSED THE KNIFE I WAS HIDING
SRLUTCH!
HERE IT IS
BLAM!

JOAN, WE'VE GOT TO GET SCOTT! HE MUST BE TERRIFIED!
WAY TO GO, DAD!
THANKS A HEAP, SCOTTY!
SPRANG!
NOW WHAT?
HAZZARD YOU CRUD! YOU KILLED MY PARTNER!
YOU'RE DEAD MAN! DEAD!!

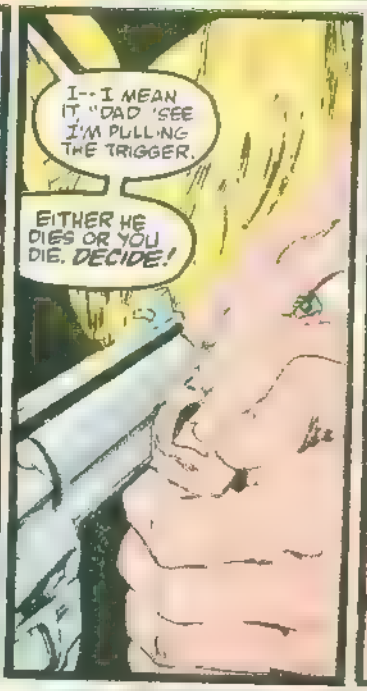
SPLATCH! SPLATCH!

C'MON COACH GET CLEAR SO I CAN NAIL THIS CLOWN

TOMMY!
BACK AWAY MAN, NOW.
THIS IS NOT MY DAY
IT'S OKAY, TOMMY! MY DAD'LL SAVE YOU!
THAT'S RIGHT, "DAD." JUST DROP THE PIECE, RAISE YOUR HANDS AND TURN SLOWLY. LET ME DO WHAT I'M BEING PAID FOR--
AND YOU CAN SAVE JUNIOR HERE FROM LOSING HIS MIND, ALL OVER THE FIELD.
NO TIME FOR WAFFLING A LIFE AND DEATH DECISION. LIKE SO MANY BEFORE
SO
OPTION 1: DON'T PUNCH. TRY FOR A CLEAR SHOT BUT SHOOT THROUGH THE BOY IF NECESSARY AND KISS YOUR SON'S RESPECT GOOD-BYE FOREVER.
OPTION 2: DROP THE GUN, TURN AROUND AND DIE, AND KISS YOUR SON GOOD-BYE FOREVER.
OPTION 3: THERE IS NO OPTION 3.
DECISION MADE. WHAT HAPPENS, HAPPENS.

GO AHEAD SHOOT HIM

HAZZARD, YOU MONSTER!
OH MARK--
DO SOME-TH NG!!
HE IS! GET HIM, DAD!


I--I MEAN IT, "DAD" SEE I'M PULL·NG THE TRIGGER.
EITHER HE DIES OR YOU DIE. DECIDE!

IT'S DECIDED
I DIE YOU LIVE NO GOOD
HE DIES, YOU DIE. THAT'S BETTER

MUCH BETTER
I WARNED YOU!!
NO! NO!! N--

CLICK CLICK
..OH

TOLD JA.
I STILL HAVE A CHANCE. IF I CAN JUST EVADE HIS SHOTS LONG ENOUGH TO RELOAD--
IT'S WORKING. HE'S TOO STUNNED TO REACT!
I DID IT.!
BLAM!
WHAT AN IDIOT.
NO I.D. WHAT WAS THIS ALL ABOUT, ANYWAY? WHO WANTS ME DEAD?
MARK, I COULD JUST KILL YOU.

HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO US? YOU COME WALTZING IN HERE, WEARING THAT STUPID HAT, ACTING AS IF... AS IF YOU'VE GOT A RIGHT TO BE HERE!
YOU BULLY THE COACH, YOU BULLY GORDON, YOU BULLY THE KIDS, AND THEN YOU RISK EVERYBODY'S LIVES IN SOME MACHO TEST OF WILLS!
WHY, MARK? THIS IS MY WORLD, NOT YOURS. WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE SCOTT AND ME ALONE? WHY?
YOU THINK THIS HAT IS STUPID?
MARK!
YOU! YOU ANIMAL! YOU WERE READY TO KILL MY SON! WHAT ARE YOU?
HE'S MY DAD! AND YOU'RE STUPID! DON'T YOU SEE-- HE COUNTED THE BULLETS! HE KNEW THE GUY WAS OUT OF AMMO.
RIGHT, DAD?
THAT'LL WORK.
UH, SURE, SURE, SOLDIER. YOU BET.
I HAD... I HAD NO IDEA. YOU UNDERSTAND HOW IT LOOKED.
I GUESS YOU SAVED MY SON'S LIFE. HOW CAN I REPAY YOU?
NO CHARGE.

AND, AS POLICE APPROACH THE PARK--
BOY, DAD-- YOU MUST BE ASHAMED OF ME. I CAN'T EVEN HIT THE BALL IN A CLINCH. BUT YOU'-- YOU'RE ALWAYS COOL. HOW DO YOU DO IT?
PRACTICE, SCOTTY.
I COULD LEARN FROM YOU-- IF YOU'D COME AROUND MORE.
WE'LL SEE, SOLDIER.
WHEN MOM SAYS "WE'LL SEE," IT MEANS NO. WHAT'S IT MEAN WHEN YOU SAY IT?
IT MEANS "WE'LL SEE."
I'VE GOT TO GO TALK TO THE COPS NOW. TAKE CARE.
MARK...
GRAPHIC PRODUCTS CO
KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, OKAY?
FOR YOU? SURE.
MOM-- YOU THINK I COULD SPEND A WEEK WITH DAD SOMEDAY? JUST, YOU KNOW, A WEEK.
WE'LL SEE.
J-MAR VARIETIES
FIGURES.
LATER...
A REPORT FROM THE FIELD, MONSIEUR GRAY-MALKIN-- OUR AGENTS FAILED TO KILL HAZZARD.
AH, ME. WHEN GORDON TOLD ME OF THE GAME, I THOUGHT IT A CHANCE TO CATCH HAZZARD OFF-GUARD. HE'S BEEN SO IRRITATING IN THE PAST.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE TO DISPOSE OF HIM. BUT IT SEEMS HE'S NEVER OFF GUARD.
C'EST LA VIE. CLOSE THE DOOR ON YOUR WAY OUT, PIERRE.
AND, IN HAZZARD'S PRIVATE GYM...
G'DAY MATE! WHO WON THE GAME?
IT DID.
"IT," MARK? WHAT "IT?"
MY WORLD!
TREETOP -- I THINK I WON OUR BET. PAY UP.
SURE. WHENEVER I TRY TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE, SOMEBODY ELSE PAYS.
AND, THAT NIGHT...
YAWN HONEY, GO TO SLEEP ALREADY.
JOAN -- HONEST, NOW -- HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HAZZARD? DEEP DOWN.
I FEEL NOTHING, HONEY. YAWN CROSS MY HEART. NOW SHUT OFF THE LIGHT.
OKAY, PUMPKIN.
GOOD NIGHT, JOAN.
YAWN
GOOD NIGHT, MARK.